

Factsheet:

Delaware's Education Plan Approved by State Board

*Major Reforms Include Improved Evaluations
and Accountability for Failing Schools*

Office of Governor Jack A. Markell

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These regulations are key elements of *Delaware's Plan to Strengthen Our Schools*. The plan can be downloaded at: http://governor.delaware.gov/docs/education_policy_agenda_Dec1.pdf

Summary of Regulations 106A and 108A: Teacher and Administrator Evaluation System

Full text available at:

- [*106A Teacher Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System \(DPAS II\) Revised*](#)
- [*108A Administrator Appraisal Process Delaware Performance Appraisal System \(DPAS II\) Revised*](#)

These regulations stipulate three changes:

1. **The “Student Improvement” component of educator evaluations is redefined.** Although the Student Improvement component requires educators to track and review student growth for their students, it does not require that actual growth be shown. These regulations will re-define the Student Improvement component to require rigorous and comparable measures of student growth. These will be benchmarked against standards to be set by the Secretary, with input from stakeholders.
2. **The rating system will be reoriented.** Under the old system, the Student Improvement component is weighted the same as the other four components of an educator's evaluation (Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instruction, and Professional Responsibilities). Therefore, an educator might never show student growth and still receive the highest rating of “Effective.” Conversely, educators might show outstanding student growth, but still receive the lowest rating of “Ineffective.”

Under the new regulations, satisfactory student growth is a required component for an educator to receive a rating of “Effective.” Educators who do not show satisfactory student growth cannot be rated “Effective,” and educators who do show satisfactory student growth cannot be rated “Ineffective.” In addition, the regulations add a new “Highly Effective” category for educators who meet at least four of the five components and who show more than one-year's worth of growth among their students.

By making these changes to the ratings, we more accurately reflect the importance of student learning, but we also more accurately identify educators who can assist their peers and educators who are in need of assistance.

3. **Teachers who are not rated "Effective" will be provided a mentor or instructional coach as part of their improvement plan.** It is not sufficient to sit down with a teacher to provide them their evaluation and then leave them without ongoing dialogue throughout the year to assist them in improving – it is not fair to our teachers, and it is not fair to our students.

Stakeholder Consultation: These changes will be implemented in consultation with the groups having the most knowledge about this issue. This regulation will take effect in the 2011/2012 school year, giving us 18 months to both implement our new evaluation system – giving us the ability to truly measure growth in the tested subjects – and work with our stakeholders to develop measures that are rigorous, comparable, and fair.

Summary of Regulation 103: Accountability for Schools Districts and the State

Full text available at: [103 Accountability for Schools, Districts and the State](#)

Approximately 40,000 Delaware students are in schools that did not meet targets for educational progress in 2008-09. Of those, 26,000 are in schools that have not made their targets for at least five consecutive years. Delaware must do more to target those schools needing assistance so that all of Delaware's children receive the opportunity to succeed.

The new regulations:

- **Provide support and flexibility to schools that have not met targets for educational progress in an area for at least two years.** The Department will provide a support team and work with the district to create an improvement plan that may include increased use of community partnerships and supplemental services for students, professional development and mentoring, use of family crisis therapists, and technical assistance. The Department will offer districts the opportunity to implement performance incentives to attract and retain effective teachers and principals.
- **Expand support and evaluate more aggressive reforms for schools that do not make educational progress for three or more years.** Such schools will work with the district and the Department to implement a reform plan that may include replacing school leadership and/or select staff, providing outside expertise to advise the school, decreasing management authority at the school level, and implementing scheduling changes to increase teacher collaboration time and extend learning time.
- **Pursue more aggressive reform in those schools that have shown a sustained inability to make educational progress.** Districts with such schools will be required to make fundamental changes in the school, which may include closing the school, converting the school to a charter school, contracting with a management company to manage the school, or other major restructuring efforts that will vary depending on the school's particular circumstances.
- **Develop a "Partnership Zone" program** in which the Secretary will select a limited number of schools that have been well below performance targets for several years to

partner with the district and the Department to chart a new course for achieving student success.

- At these schools, the Department and the district will negotiate and enter an agreement on how to turn that school around. Those agreements will require major changes in the school – such as reorganization of school leadership, redistributing educators to use them most effectively, financial incentives for teachers who join the school or choose to stay at the school, specialized educator training, and allowing new administrators to have critical flexibilities over budgeting and staff with appropriate oversight.
- Districts will also have the option of restarting the school as a charter school, contracting with an outside management organization, or closing the school.
- Changes implicating collective bargaining protections would be negotiated with the local bargaining unit, and the Secretary of Education would be empowered to resolve such disputes.